According to the prominent Bulgarian literary critic and historian Petăr Dinekov, the origin of Bulgarian and Slavic translation theory dates back to Joan the Exarch. In the preface to his translation of *The Fountain of Wisdom* by S. John of Damascus (translated around 893), Joan the Exarch rejects literal translation. Translations have been extremely important for the origin and development of Bulgarian literature since the Middle Ages. During the Bulgarian National Revival (Văzraždane), between the late 18th and 19th centuries, new topic and literary genres spread in Bulgaria through translations from Modern Greek in the first stage, later from other languages. It should be underlined that several Bulgarian writers such as Ivan Vazov, Petko Slavejkov, Aleko Konstantinov, Pejo Javorov, Dimčo Debeljanov, Atanas Dalčev, Elizaveta Bagrjana, Blaga Dimitrova and many others were also translators. Dalčev also made some observations about the ways of translation in his book *Fragmenti* (1967). However, not all Bulgarian translators agree on the importance of translation studies for their work; Ljubomir Iliev, translator of fiction literature from German, states: “As a translator, I am interested in translation theory as much as birds are interested in ornithology”.

I will mention again Dinekov. Although the scholar explicitly states that he does not mean to theorize, he expresses some interesting opinions. He identifies three moments: 1. translations allow us to share the achievements...
of world literature and culture; 2. they influence the development of a national literature and help in forming a reading public; 3. they can be regarded as creative laboratories, with special regard to literary or poetic language.

Several scholars have dealt with translology since the first half of the 20th century. One of the first and most prominent Bulgarian Translation theorists was Ljubomir Ognjanov-Rizor, who established the basis of Bulgarian translology. As in the aforementioned cases, Ognjanov-Rizor was a translator himself; he translated some of Shakespeare’s plays into Bulgarian.

Scholars such as Ivanka Vaseva, Anna Lilova, Aleksandr Ljudski, Sider Florin, Sergei Vlachov, Henri Levenson, Ljuben Ljubenov, Elena Mecheva and many others have written on this matter since the ’50s. Translation studies underwent further development in the ’70s and in the ’80s: apart from books, many articles were published in specialized journals such as “Izkustvoto na prevoda”, “Bulgarski ezik”, “Ezik i Literatura”. Some of them provide accounts regarding the status of research in Translation Theories, both in Bulgaria and abroad.

It is worth noting that not all Bulgarian sources are written in Bulgarian. A few outstanding works are written in Russian, starting with S. Vlachov and S. Florin’s Neperevodimoe v perevode (The Untranslatable in Translation), written in Russian and later translated into Bulgarian. Bulgarian scholars who wrote in Russian include I. Vaseva and S. Florin. Other sources are written in English; this is the case of the collection Readings in General Translation Theory, compiled by Bistra Aleksieva. It was at first printed in 1987, then reprinted in 1993, both times by Sofia University Press “St. Klement Ochridski”.

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5 L. Ognjanov-Rizor, Osnovi na prevodačeskoto izkustvo (Bases of the Art of Translation), Sofia, Kamara na Narodnata kultura, 1947.
6 I. Vaseva, Publikacii po teorija i istorija na prevoda i kritika na teoretični trudove prez 1981 g., cit., pp. 127-137. The author criticizes some of the works published in 1981, however such an overview gives the reader precious bibliographical information.
8 I. Vaseva, Teorija i praktika perevoda (The Theory and Practice of Translation), Sofija, Nauka i izkustvo, 1980.
9 S. Florin, Muki perevodčeskie (Troubles for translators), Moskva, Vysšaja škola, 1983. In this book the author shares his personal experience as a translator.
10 Works by Bistra Aleksieva written in English include: Levels of Semantic Analysis in Translation, in Translatologia Pragensia. I. Acta Universitas Carolinæ, “Philologica”, 4-5,
Works were written in German by Krasimira Kočeva\textsuperscript{11} and in French by Lǎčezar Stančev.\textsuperscript{12}

It is worth mentioning the collection edited by Palma Zlateva in 1994.\textsuperscript{13} It is the first noteworthy attempt to introduce Western readers to the theories by Bulgarian scholars. The collection opens with a preface by S. Bassnett and A. Lefevere, and an introduction by Zlateva. It includes articles by some of the foremost Bulgarian translation theorists: Iliana Vladova, Andrej Dančev,\textsuperscript{14} Bistra Aleksićeva, Sider Florin; alongside, articles by Russian and Soviet scholars (Ja. Recker, Vl. Gak, L. Barchudarov, A. Švejcer, V. Komissarov, M. Brandes, I. Zinnjaja, L. Černjachovskaja) are published. Each article contains an introduction by A. Lefevere, which summarizes the main points.

In the foreword, Zlateva focuses on the different approach to the discipline by scholars from the West and from Russia and Bulgaria. For instance, “the whole debate on translatability, which paralyzed translation studies in the West for at least two decades after 1945, did not exert any comparable in-

\textsuperscript{11} K. Kočeva, Probleme des literarischen Übersetzens aus textlinguistischer Sicht. Dar gestellt am Beispiel bulgarischer Übersetzungen zu Prosatexten aus der deutschen Gegenwarts literatur, Frankfurt am Main, Lang, 1992.


\textsuperscript{13} See Translation as Social Action: Russian and Bulgarian, cit. The book is part of the series “Translation Studies”, edited by S. Bassnett and A. Lefevere.

fluence in Russia”. The impossibility of translating and the huge number of translations are, according to the scholars, two “utterly irreconcilable positions”, and “mental acrobatics” are required in order to reconcile them. Moreover, the critical vocabulary is stable in Russia and Bulgaria, whereas Western scholars “reinvent” it all the time. But the main difference, in Zlateva’s opinion, is that in Russia and Bulgaria translation is regarded as a creative activity, whereas in the West it is considered a “meaningless drudgery” (sic!). Such a difference affects the way the authors deal with the subject. Russian and Bulgarian scholars do codify norms, but do not impose them to the translator (as their Western colleagues do, according to Zlateva). Problems such as the psychological aspect of the translation have not been paid attention to in the West. However, the author also finds some weak points in the studies collected in the volume. One of them is the “heavy, almost exclusive reliance on a positivistic ideal of science that tends to be viewed as out of date in the West. The question arises as to what extent scholars working inside the tradition represented here not only were cut off from recent developments in the philosophy of science, but also were constrained to work under the shadow of more or less dogmatic Marxism-Leninism as institutionalized in the former Soviet Union”. Russian and Bulgarian tradition is also marked by a certain rhetoric, which is even more regrettable because “this kind of rhetoric would not infrequently manage to overshadow valuable insights”.

Some of the work’s flaws are focused on in some reviews. The book lacks an introduction explaining where, when and in what language the articles were written. No information is given regarding the authors and their activity. As for the different approaches by Eastern and Western scholars, according to Sohár “the reader may well wonder whether the differences have not been exaggerated a bit”. Moreover, Cyrillic characters are sometimes improperly transcribed. However, the work’s positive points are also recognized. The analysis of the process of translation activity and the different approaches to it (psychological, cognitive) make the book innovative.

Western encyclopedias seldom include articles about Translation theory in Bulgaria, and some of them are not exhaustive. However, some works...
have been published in several languages, as in the case of the essay Prevež-
dat čovekât i mašinata by Aleksandër Ljudskanov. It was firstly printed in
Sofia in 1967 by the publishing house Nauka i izkustvo. A French edition21
in two volumes dates back to 1969. It was compiled by Ljudskanov himself
and can be considered a ‘second original’ rather than a translation. It is a li-
imited edition. There is also a German edition from 1972.22 In 1975 an article
in English was published;23 although it beares the signature of Ljudskanov, it
is actually a rework, made by Brian Harris, of an author’s speech in French.
The same article announces the forthcoming publication of English and Polish
translations of the book, which apparently were never made. The book was
translated into Italian in 2008. The Italian version is not a full translation; it
is reduced by about two-fifths of the original. Some parts closely linked to
cybernetics have been removed, as well as two chapters on machine transla-
tion because they appear obsolete if compared with today’s technology.24

Now, I would like to illustrate the content of some of the most important
books. Given the lack of comprehensive studies on the subject and the non-
exhaustive character of some encyclopedia articles, my work aims at provid-
ing a first review of the works by Bulgarian scholars, open to further di-

cussion.

I will start with Osnovi na prevodačeskoto izkustvo by Ognjanov-Rizor.
It is divided into two parts: Teorija na prevodačeskoto tvorčestvo and Prak-
tika na prevodačeskoto tvorčestvo. The book can be considered prescriptive;
it gives some rules on how to translate, but sometimes does not illustrate it in
depth.

I will mention some of the views expressed by the author in the first part.
He distances himself from authors such as K. Vossler and E. Elster, who re-
gard language as a subjective and individual phenomenon; despite the fact
that there are many varieties of the same language, depending on people’s

ledge, 2001, pp. 360-361; R. Lauer, Die Übersetzungkultur in Bulgarien, in Übersetzung –
Translation – Traduction: ein internationales Handbuch zur Übersetzungsfor-}

22 Id., Mensch und Maschine als Übersetzer. Aus dem bulgarischen übersetzt von G. Jä-
23 Id., A semiotic approach to the Theory of Translation, “Language Sciences”, (april
1975), pp. 5-8.
24 Id., Un approccio semiotico alla traduzione: dalla prospettiva informatica alla scienza
traduttiva, ed. italiana a c. di B. Osimo, Milano, Hoepli, 2008, pp. VII, XVIII.
social and cultural differences, every language has its “objective indices” (syntax, vocabulary, rhythm, musicality). These indices are totally untranslatable; every effort to preserve them in the translation is vain and violates the rules of translator’s language. Translators must preserve the content of the original work, but they must comply with the norms of their own language. Ognjanov-Rizor shares the view of Dialectical materialism, which regards the content as the most salient element. However, some elements that are usually considered as belonging to the form should be regarded as content instead; it concerns all individual peculiarities in the usage of vocabulary, syntax, rhythm and metre. Content is all that makes the author peculiar and different from his contemporaries.

The crucial role of translations is also focused on; translations make masterpieces accessible to readers from all over the world. A history of translated literature is provided in the third chapter; at the end of this chapter the author states that a translation theory is possible only on the basis of the literary theory of the Socialist realism. The fourth chapter is entitled “Enemies of the art of translation”: all who undervalue or criticize the art of translation are regarded as enemies. This category include scholars such as Vossler, who believe that translation is impossible due to the fully subjective character of language. However, scholars are relatively harmless; according to Ognjanov-Rizor, bad translators and mean publishers should be regarded as the most dangerous enemies. A good translator must be able to render clearly and precisely the original text: according to the scholar, there cannot be unclear passages, since all has been clear to the author of the text.

The second part is divided into 12 chapters; “practical” questions such as the choice of the texts, the role of the dictionaries, the style, the influence of regional dialects and argots are analysed.

Another extremely important book is Neperevodimoe v perevode, by Vlachov and Florin. We should keep in mind that an article by the same authors, with the same title was published in 1969. The authors further develop their views in the book. Perhaps the most salient point of the book is the fist part, devoted to realia. The word itself was not invented by Vlachov and Florin:

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25 Some of these ideas seems to anticipate those expressed in the preface of the mentioned book by Zlateva.
other translation theorists have previously used it. Vlachov and Florin conform to the definition of realia by the Soviet scholar Sobolev who regards them as the words which define certain objects, and not as the objects themselves. The classification of realia by Vlachov and Florin has become quite famous outside Bulgaria.

Realia are words that denote objects, concepts and phenomena typical only of a particular culture. They show that the universes of reference of two different cultures never totally overlap. Vlachov and Florin divide them into categories, which in turn contain sub-categories: by object (these realia can be: geographic and ethnographic; related to everyday life; political and social); by place (national, local, or ‘microlocal’, i.e. typical of very small territories); by time (historical, contemporary).

Realia can be translated or transcribed: the authors give several suggestions in order to correctly translate them. First of all, it is necessary to determine whether a word is actually a realia. Some words are realia only in certain contexts: for instance, the word 

\[ \text{mužik} \]

is a realia only when it defines a serf. Realia must never be transcribed if used figuratively in the original text. Transcription is necessary only if the words stand out in the original text; it should also be avoided when a similar word exists in the translator’s language. The aim of transcribing realia is to preserve the atmosphere of the epoch and the geographical connotation of the book. However, using too many foreign words should be avoided, therefore realia do not need to be

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transcribed if the original does not pay much attention to them. They must not be replaced with other realia from other languages.

Apart from realia, the authors focus on other categories such as anachronisms, proper names, wordplays. Suggestions are also given in order to correctly translate wordplay.

After Vlachov and Florin many other authors went back to the problem of correct translation of realia. M. Ivanova criticized the Bulgarian translation from English of the film *The Man in the Iron Mask*, where D’Artagnan addresses the heir to the throne of France calling him “mylord”. This is actually a mistake, because such words can be transcribed only if they fit the context, in the specific case if we are talking about an English nobleman; certainly not if we are talking about the heir to the throne of France.

The aforementioned *Teorija i praktika perevoda* by I. Vaseva contains an introduction and two parts. In the introduction, the author dwells upon the different kinds of translations and explains the bases of Translation theory, mentioning some of the main scholars from Bulgaria, the Soviet Union and other countries. The first part is devoted to the contemporary tendencies of Translation studies; attention is paid mainly to Soviet scholars such as A.V. Fëdorov, L. Barchudarov, V. Komissarov, Ja. Recker, A. Švejcer. In the second part, lexical, phraseological, grammatical and stylistic questions are focused on. Such questions include the difficulties that derive from the false friends and, once again, the translation of realia. The differences in the grammatical structure of Russian and Bulgarian are also deeply analysed.

Another crucial work is the book by Anna Lilova from 1981. It is divided into eight chapters. In the first chapter, after having analysed the main aspects of translation activity, such as its social nature, linguistic and aesthetic aspects, the creative nature of translation process and its relation with the historic and cultural context, the scholar defines translation as a complex,

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38 See also the review by D. Damjanova, “Bălgarski ezik”, (1981) 2, pp. 164-165.
many-sided, multipurpose phenomenon, which must be studied in all its com-
ponents. The other chapters deal with the topic in a dialectical way: the dia-
lectical unity of form and content, objective and subjective, national and
international, historic and contemporary is explored. The social nature of
translation, its functions and the kinds and genres of translation are dwelt
upon in the last three chapters. In the eighth chapter Lilova identifies three
forms of translation: written, oral and machine translation. These forms are
divided into several kinds of translation: socio-political, literary, scientific
and technological translation; the kinds of translation are in turn divided into
genres.\(^{40}\) The scholar proposes to further develop her views in the second part
of her work, but this second part appears never to have been published.

I will mention again the collection *Readings in General translation theo-
ry*, compiled by Bistra Aleksieva. Unlike Zlateva’s work, which helps We-

tern readers get to know some works by Bulgarian authors, this book intro-
duces Bulgarian readers with scholars from other countries. The book is a
“collection of papers and excerpts from monographs” by several authors, in-
cluding L. Barchudarov, J. Levý, R. Jakobson, A. Švejcer, V. Komissarov,
E. Nida, P. Newmark, J.C. Catford, A.V. Fëdorov. It is a didactic text; as the
author herself explains the aim of her book in the foreword, it “has been
compiled in order to give the student a chance to familiarize himself with the
original formulation of some of the most important theoretical approaches to
central issues in General Translation Theory”. A selected bibliography is also
included.

The problem of translating from similar languages such as Russian into
Bulgarian has drawn the attention of many scholars. The affinity between the
two languages may lead to misinterpretation. According to Vaseva\(^{41}\) one of
the main problems affecting many translations from Russian is literalism. The
words that are similar in the two languages but have different meanings are
regarded as particularly dangerous.\(^{42}\) Translating Russian diminutives with
Bulgarian diminutives also leads to mistakes, because Bulgarian diminutives
do not have the same nuances. Foreign constructions and word order are often
arbitrarily copied. Russian words such as Čeremucha, grač are transcribed

\(^{40}\) A. Lilova, *Uvod v obštata teorija na prevoda*, cit., pp. 292-313. See also A. Lilova, Za
njakoi osnovni metodologičeski principi na prevodoznanieto (Some basic methodological
principles of Translatology), “Izkustvoto na Prevoda”, 2 (1977), pp. 91-120.

\(^{41}\) I. Vaseva, Specifični trudnosti pri prevoda ot ruski na bǎlgarski ezik v oblasta na gra-
matikata i stilistikata (Specific difficulties in translation from Russian into Bulgarian in the

\(^{42}\) Cf. L. Ognjanov-Rizor, *Osnovi na prevodačesko izkustvo*, cit., p. 95.
instead of being translated, although they are unknown to average readers. More recent works address the same issues.

Attention is also paid to translations into Bulgarian from other Slavic languages such as Polish. Iskra Likomanova devoted a whole book to Translation from Slavic languages into other Slavic languages. Among the scholars who have devoted their works to translations from non-Slavic languages into Bulgarian, I will mention Ana Dimova, who focuses on translations from German.

Several scholars have dealt with the translation of poetry and have expressed some opinions on this matter. For instance, according to Ljubenov, a translator should not try to recreate the strophe just by translating the words; poetic equivalents should be found. The translator should be endowed with poetic insight; he should be able to create rhymes like in the original poetry. The strophes should not be translated sequentially, because it does not give good results. Ljubenov enumerates twenty-one evaluation criteria for the translations. He also identifies three possible approaches to the extant translations of the same work: they can be fully ignored until the translation is published; thus, the coincidences will be few and fully fortuitous. A translator can look it up in the other translations once he finishes his work, or he can consult them before starting his own translation and keep them in mind during his work. This is the kind of approach the scholar prefers.

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44 S. Tomanova, “Mežduzajcovo vzaimodejstvie v prevoda ot ruski na bǎlgarski i ot bǎlgarski na ruski ezik” (Interlingual interaction in translation from Russian into Bulgarian and from Bulgarian into Russian), Blagoevgrad, Universitetsko izdatelstvo Neofit Rilski, 2009, pp. 54, 106-111.
49 It is worth mentioning that Ljubenov, together with Iv. Ivanov, is one of the Bulgarian translators of the Divine Comedy.
Most of the mentioned works focus mainly on translations of literary works. It might also be added that some authors have paid attention to specific literary genres such as children’s literature. However, there are also works that deal specifically with the different ways of translation of terms related to Science and Technology. One of the main questions is when should foreign words be transcribed, thus becoming loanwords, and when should equivalent Bulgarian words be used.

Given that a paper in this volume is specifically devoted to Ljudskanov, I would like to say a few words about his book Preveždat čovekāt i mašinata. Therefore, I will mention his classification of the kinds of translations: 1. from a constructed language to another constructed language; 2. from a natural language to another natural language; 3. from a constructed language to a natural language or vice versa. According to Ljudskanov, there are three main translation genres: translations of scientific literature; translations of socio-political literature; translations of fiction.

Other works focus on aspects such as the correct translation of other categories such as acronyms and abbreviation or geographical names.

To conclude, we can observe that Translation Studies have undergone an impressive development in Bulgaria since the second half of the 20th century. A wide range of aspects has been examined; the correct ways of translation of all kinds of texts have been deeply studied. Some of the results achieved by Bulgarian scholars have come into prominence in an international framework. Translation Studies occupy a prominent place in Bulgarian Linguistic research. The large number of books and articles on this matter witnesses the great significance achieved by this field of study in Bulgaria over the last decades.

51 For instance, according to K. Cankov, the use of the Russian word lesopila (chainsaw) is fully inappropriate, since it is incomprehensible for the Bulgarian audience. K. Cankov, Što za istrument e lesopilata? (What kind of tool is lesopila?), “Bǎlgarski ezik”, (1981) 1, pp. 70-71. Other terms are focused on in L. Ljubenov, Njakoi tipični greški pri prevoda na naučna elektrotehničeska literatura ot ruskij ezik, in Ezikovi problemi na prevoda: ruskij ezik (Linguistic problem of translation: Russian language), Sǎst. I. Vaseva, Sofija, Nauka i izkustvo, 1989, pp. 181-186.
52 A. Ljudskanov, Preveždat čovekāt i mašinata, cit., pp. 101-104.